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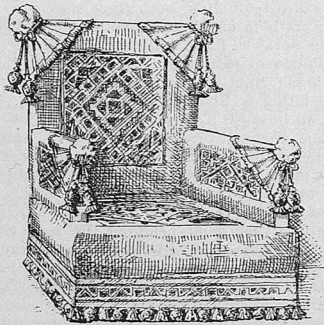
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# THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

## RECENT LONDON NOTIONS.

IN a series of rapid, but forceful sketches, Mr. J. Williams Benn, of the Cabinet Maker, gives us an idea of what was to be seen in the shop windows of London during the holiday season. From among them we reproduce several which will doubtless strike our readers as novel and in some cases valuable suggestions.

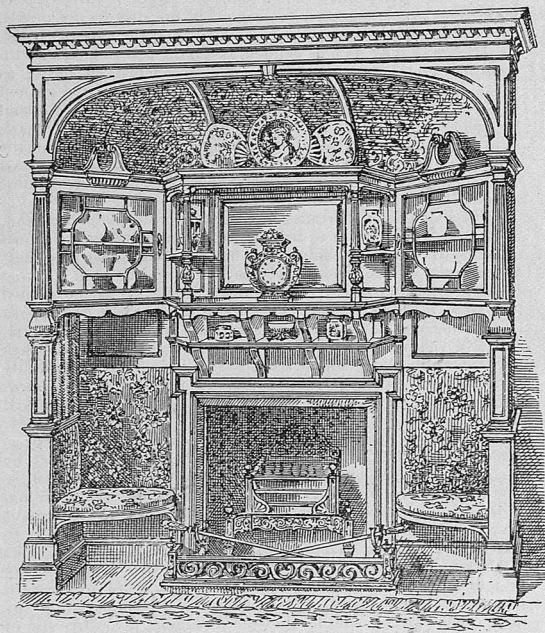
The ingle nook for a drawing room was shown by Hindley & Sons, of Oxford street. It was painted a creamy white with



appropriate upholstery in the corner seats and side curtains. The grate and fittings are of brass and iron.

Very original is the Cabinet idea in the screen shown in combination with a table and chair by William Whitely. The chair is enamelled white, the spat being painted in delicate tints. Mrs. Frank Oliver is the designer of the three fancy tables in another illustration. The one on the left is called the Shamrock and that on the right the Rose. The Shamrock differs only from the ordinary clover leaf table in having the stem. We reproduce them for the benefit of our amateur readers.

Another lady comes to the front with the pretty little *Billet-doux* table, the novelty of which consists in the fact that it

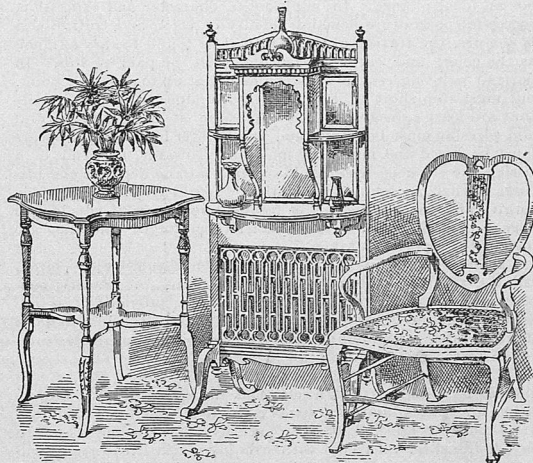


can be used either as a square or center table. The latter is its normal condition while it is easily converted into a square by simply opening out the two angular flaps which when open are supported upon spring brackets shutting flat against the sides when not in use. The little boxes below are intended for papers, etc. It is the invention of Miss Charlotte Robinson of Burk street, New Bond street.

## PORTRAIT PAINTING IN OILS.

By MRS. EMMA HATWOOD.

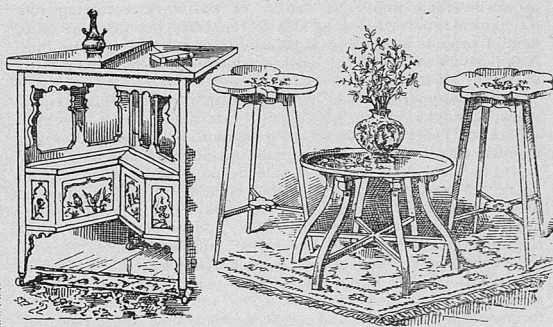
PORTRAIT painting as a profession is not so largely followed as in the days when photography was unknown, indeed, when photographs first became the fashion as souvenirs of one's friends and relations, the art of portrait painting for the time being became paralysed and many artists who had devoted



themselves exclusively to it, found themselves obliged to turn their attention to other branches of painting in order to earn a living.

Of late years there has been somewhat of a reaction, and family portraits are again coming into favor; but, as a rule, except in the case of a few who have attained high eminence in their calling, the prices heretofore readily given are no longer obtainable.

To paint portraits easily and well is generally the result of some years of study and experience. To catch a likeness is with some a comparatively easy task, but, alas, how often a resemblance positively striking in the first instance is lost in the working up. Want of knowledge is most to blame for this, too much detail destroys the breadth of light and shade, and ob-



literates the characteristics noted and emphasized in the first painting; in fact, a struggle after finish and technique causes the inexperienced artist to lose sight of a fundamental principle, namely, that true finish is best attained by careful attention to the modeling of the features rather than by any particular method of laying on the color.

Many highly finished portraits lack vitality without which the most elaborately painted portrait is uninteresting and insipid.

One great obstacle to the production of a speaking likeness lies in the fact that the artist, as a rule, is not intimately acquainted with the features he is endeavoring to portray in their ordinary every day aspect as best known to their friends, he is also apt to place his sitter so that the most may be made of him from an artistic point of view, treating him in fact as he would an ordinary model. This proves to be, in nine cases out